



The Devil's Details: A History of Footnotes

Chuck Zerby

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Footnotes have not had it easy. Their dominance of eighteenth- and nineteenth- century literature and scholarship was both hard-won -- following many years of struggle -- and doomed, as it led to belittlement in the twentieth century. In *The Devil's Details*, Chuck Zerby playfully explores footnotes' long and illustrious history and makes a clarion call to save them from the new world of the Internet and hypertext.

In a story that boasts a marvelous plot and a rogues' gallery of players, Zerby examines traditional footnotes and their less-buttoned-down incarnations, as when used by pornographers. Yes, *The Devil's Details* is full of surprises: Zerby hunts down the first bona fide fully functioning footnote; unearths a multivolume history of Northumberland County, England, that uses one volume for a single footnote; and uncovers a murder plot. He even explains why footnotes are like blind dates.

Carefully researched and highly opinionated, *The Devil's Details* affirms that delight in reading can come from unexpected places.

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